

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CCO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10

PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19

IO-14 OMB-01 EB-11 COME-00 TRSE-00 SCI-06 SCEM-02

INT-08 AID-20 DRC-01 /197 W
----- 072314

R 230826Z NOV 73

FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8143

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT POUCH
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY SANAA
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

S E C R E T KUWAIT 4101

BEIRUT PASS BAGHDAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR KU BA QA TC MU

SUBJ: GULF ATTITUDES IN WAKE OF OCTOBER WAR

SUMMARY: DURING NINE-DAY GULF TRIP TO ASSESS MOOD OF GULF AND
OMANI ARABS SINCE OCTOBER WAR, AMBASSADOR URGED ARABS GIVE US
EFFORTS FOR PEACE EVERY POSSIBILITY TO SUCCEED. AMBASSADOR FOUND
US EFFORTS FOR PEACE UNIVERSALLY WELCOMED, BUT SOVIET GAINS IN
MIDEAST AT US EXPENSE WAS SOURCE OF CONCERN. GULF LEADERS WANT
QUICKEST POSSIBLE PROGRESS ON MIDEAST PROBLEM AND END TO OIL

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EMBARGO, AND THEY UNDERSTAND EMBARGO IS TWO-EDGED SWORD. US

POSITION IN GULF AND OMAN REMAINS INTACT, BUT REAL MOMENTUM
TOWARD MIDEAST SETTLEMENT NECESSARY TO AVOID GRADUAL EROSION
US POSITION. END SUMMARY

1. DURING NINE-DAY PERIOD NOV 11 TO 20 I VISITED UAE, OMAN,
QATAR AND BAHRAIN IN THAT ORDER. TOUR INCLUDED MEETINGS WITH ALL
RULERS EXCEPT SULTAN QABOOS OF OMAN, ALL FOREIGN MINISTERS AND
NUMEROUS OTHER KEY PEOPLE INSIDE AND OUTSIDE GOVERNMENT, NATIVE
AND FOREIGN. HAD TALKS AS WELL WITH MANY NEW AMERICANS THROUGH-
OUT AREA INCLUDING PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS IN OMAN AND BAHRAIN.

2. PRIMARY PURPOSE OF TRIP WAS TO ASSESS MOOD OF GULF AND OMANI
ARABS AND US POSITION IN GULF FOLLOWING OCTOBER WAR. FOR MOST
PART I AVOIDED INITIATING DISCUSSION OF LOCAL ISSUES AND BILATERAL
AFFAIRS TAKING INSTEAD FOLLOWING STANDARD APPROACH IN ALL MAJOR
TALKS: USG NOW INVOLVED IN ALL-OUT EFFORT HELP BRING PARTIES TO
DISPUTE

TOGETHER. WE BELIEVE JUST SETTLEMENT IS POSSIBLE, WE
DETERMINED SUCCEED IN OUR EFFORTS, AND CHANCES FOR SETTLEMENT
PROBABLY NEVER BETTER THAN NOW AND OVER COURSE COMING MONTHS.
END OF ROAD NOT VISIBLE YET AND USG HAS NO BLUEPRINT FOR SETTLE-
MENT. MAXIMUM FLEXIBILITY BY ALL CONCERNED IS ESSENTIAL; SOLUTION
WILL COME ONLY STEP BY STEP, AND PREMATURE FIXING OF RIGID POSITIONS
COULD BE FATAL. WHATEVER MAY BE THOUGHT OF HISTORICAL RECORD OF
US SUPPORT OF ISRAEL, FACT IS BECAUSE OF THAT SUPPORT, US IS ONLY
POWER WITH EFFECTIVE INFLUENCE IN TEL AVIV AS WELL AS ARAB SIDE,
AND THUS US ROLE IN SETTLEMENT EFFORT IS CRUCIAL. US EFFORTS MUST
BE GIVEN CHANCE TO WORK; SHRILL CRITICISM AND INSULTS WILL DO

NOTHING TO ENHANCE PROSPECTS FOR SUCCESS. ARABS HAVE DEMONSTRATED
THEIR WILLINGNESS AND ABILITY TO FIGHT FOR THEIR CAUSE BOTH
MILITARILY AND ECONOMICALLY THROUGH OIL. THEY HAVE PROVED THEIR
POINT. EVERY WEAPON HAS ITS LIMITATIONS, AND QUESTION NOW IS
WHETHER OR NOT ARABS UNDERSTAND LIMITATIONS OF WEAPONS THEY
ARE USING. OIL EMBARGO IS TWO-EDGED SWORD.

3. BASED ON REACTION TO THIS PRESENTATION, I HAVE DRAWN FOLLOWING
CONCLUSIONS:

A. US EFFORTS TO HELP BRING ABOUT SETTLEMENT ARE UNIVERSALLY
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AND STRONGLY WELCOMED BY GULF LEADERS. HOPE FOR US SUCCESS IS,
HOWEVER, TEMPERED BY HEAVY SKEPTICISM THAT ISRAEL WILL IN FACT
WITHDRAW FROM PRE-OCTOBER 6 LINES. MOST FREQUENTLY HEARD REMARKS
WERE "WE ARE FED UP WITH THIS PROBLEM" AND "YOU (US) ARE ONLY
ONES WHO CAN SOLVE IT, BUT WE CAN'T BELIEVE YOU REALLY WILL."

B. SOVIETS ARE BELIEVED TO HAVE GAINED GREATLY IN MIDEAST AT
EXPENSE OF US AND THIS IS SOURCE OF DEEP CONCERN. ONLY RULER

OF BAHRAIN THOUGHT KING FAISAL WOULD INVITE DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

WITH USSR, BUT MOST GULF LEADERS BELIEVE THEY WILL BE FORCED
ACCEPT OVERTURES FROM SOVIETS IF FAISAL DOES SO. VIRTUALLY EVERY-
ONE IN RESPONSIBLE GOVT OR BUSINESS POSITIONS SEE BEGINNING OF
END FOR PRESENT FREE CAPITALIST SYSTEM, LEADERSHIP, AND WAY OF
LIFE ONCE SOVIETS GAIN DIPLOMATIC FOOTHOLD IN GULF.

C. GULF LEADERS WANT QUICKEST POSSIBLE PROGRESS ON MIDEAST
PROBLEM AND END TO OIL EMBARGO. ABU DHABI MIN OF OIL AFFAIRS
OTEIBA (WHO BY THE WAY WAS FIRST TO DECLARE COMPLETE EMBARGO BY
HIS COUNTRY OF OIL TO US AT RECENT KUWAIT CONFERENCE) TOLD ME
ABU DHABI HURTING FROM CUT BACK "WHICH HAS REACHED 50 PERCENT"
AND IS RESERVING LARGE PART OF ITS PRODUCTION WHICH IT BADLY
WANTS TO SELL TO US.

D. GULF LEADERS CLEARLY UNDERSTAND THAT OIL EMBARGO IS TWO-
EDGED SWORD AND THEY WORRIED ABOUT IT. HOWEVER, EYEY DO NOT
FEEL THEY CAN MAKE ANY MOVE WITHOUT FAISAL WHO THEY HOPE WILL
LET UP ON THE PRESSURE SOON.

E. PRES SADAT IS HELD IN VERY HIGH REGARD IN GULF. MAJOR WORRY
IS HE WILL NOT BE ABLE SURVIVE. (AND OF COURSE PEOPLE WILL SAY
IT IS US FAULT IF HE DOES NOT.) LEADERSHIP APPROVES SADAT'S
ACTIONS TOWARD PEACE SO FAR. ON POPULAR LEVEL, HOWEVER, THERE IS
MUCH CRITICISM OF HIS SPEEDY AGREEMENT TO CEASEFIRE.

F. PRES ASSAD IS BELIEVED TO BE SUFFICIENTLY FREE AGENT TO FOLLOW
SADAT EVEN IF SOVIETS TRY TO STOP HIM. GULF LEADERS BELIEVE ASSAD
WANTS PEACEFUL SOLUTION JUST AS MUCH AS SADAT DOES.

G. ON OTHER HAND IRAQIS ARE BELIEVED THOROUGHLY IN POCKET OF
SOVIETS, AND LIKE PDRY, NO LONGER FREE AGENTS.

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H. WHILE LEADERSHIP OF ALL FOUR STATES IS DEEPLY CONCERNED OVER
PRESENT OUTLOOK IN MIDEAST, UAE AND QATAR ARE RELATIVELY MOST
CALM AND CALCULATING, OMAN MOST PREOCCUPIED WITH ITS OWN PROBLEMS,
AND BAHRAIN MOST PANICKY. BAHRAIN LEADERS IN FACT BADLY NEED SOME
HANDHOLDING (AND WE HAVE SOME THOUGHT WHICH MIGHT HELP, TO BE
SUBMITTED SEPARATELY).

I. MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL, US POSITION IN GULF AND OMAN IS STILL
ENTIRELY INTACT. IT IS CLEAR THAT IF WE CAN ACHIEVE REAL MOMENTUM
TOWARD MIDEAST SETTLEMENT IN ANY REASONABLE TIMEFRAME, US IN-
FLUENCE IN GULF WILL ONCE AGAIN BE RAPIDLY ON INCREASE AS IT WAS
PRIOR TO OCTOBER WAR. IF NOT, WE CAN EXPECT GRADUAL EROSION OF
OUR POSITION AND STRENGTHENING OF THOSE BELOW-SURFACE REVOLUTIONARY

AND RADICAL ELEMENTS WHICH HAVE BEEN IN LIMBO AND MANAGABLE
UP TO NOW BUT ARE SUSCEPTIBLE TO SOVIET AND CHINESE EXPLOITATION.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PETROLEUM, ARMISTICE, EMBARGOES, PEACE PLANS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 NOV 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: worrelsw
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973KUWAIT04101
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: KUWAIT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731117/aaaaamcm.tel
Line Count: 172
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: worrelsw
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 DEC 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <27-Dec-2001 by shawdg>; APPROVED <05 MAR 2002 by worrelsw>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GULF ATTITUDES IN WAKE OF OCTOBER WAR SUMMARY: DURING NINE-DAY GULF TRIP TO ASSESS MOOD OF GULF AND
TAGS: PFOR, ENRG, KU, BA, QA, TC, MU, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005